

CONSERVATION & ARCHAEOLOGY IN MILTON KEYNES 2020

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The Conservation & Archaeology Team received 885 planning consultations during 2020, 480 of which were for the Senior Archaeological Officer.

During August 2020 the Senior Archaeological Officer took part in an online planning public inquiry (Ref: APP/Y0435/W/20/3251121) concerning a refused application for outline permission to construct a warehousing and distribution site at **South Caldecotte, Bow Brickhill**. The application was initially refused as it would lead to the loss of regionally significant archaeological remains comprising a Roman road and adjacent plots and possible structures relating to the nearby scheduled monument of the small Roman town and fort of Magiovinium.

During the course of the inquiry the appellant negotiated a new scheme preserving in situ the most significant remains within public open space as part of a revised layout. The revised scheme was put before the inspector and ultimately the appeal was allowed with the appellant paying the majority of the Council's legal fees. This positive outcome led to officers being singled out for praise by the Leader of the Council, Cllr. Peter Marland at September's Full Council meeting.

The **Bicycle Wall Mural, Stantonbury** has been taken down and re-erected in a different position within the same site, as part of a comprehensive redevelopment of the local centre into a supermarket.

Below: Draft New Town Heritage Register cover entry.



The mural is a substantial piece made up of a number of tiles, created by John Watson and fired at the local school, Stantonbury Campus, during the late 1970's.

Such 'community artworks' were part of the creation of the new town aimed at creating a sense of place and identity, often involving the community in their creation. The mural was taken down tile by tile (cut to include the brick backing), stored, then re-erected in its new position (currently still covered in scaffold).

It is nominated to the New Town Heritage Register, but yet to be considered. Nonetheless the C&A Team and the local planning authority considered the mural to be a non-designated heritage asset as defined in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and were able to require its retention through re-location. The owners, ALDI, have recently involved Kirsten Ramsay (from BBC's 'Repair Shop' programme) to advised on the final stages of tile conservation.

FIELDWORK

Despite the pandemic 2020 was another busy year for fieldwork with 22 projects notified to the Historic Environment Record (HER), full list appended. Projects comprised:

6 trial trench evaluations, 3 geophysical surveys; 6 excavations and 7 watching briefs.

Highlights included a watching brief at **The Old Vicarage, Olney**, the former home of the reformed slaver Rev. John Newton (1725-1807). While revealed little that could be directly connected to Newton's time, the work uncovered evidence for the possible use of the site as a tannery yard during the late 17th to early 18th century in addition to recovering some interesting post-medieval ceramics including a Staffordshire-type earthenware posset pot dating to c.1690 to the early 1700s (image below).



HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

One site was added to the National Heritage List for England (NHLE): **Campbell Park** in Central Milton Keynes was designated as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden in August, the first national designation of a Milton Keynes New Town designed landscape. NHLE record here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1467405>



Campbell Park, Grade II Registered Park and Garden

HERITAGE AT RISK

The Heritage at Risk register was first published in June 2018. Work to update the register took place during 2019, with publication of the updated register in January 2021. The January 2021 version of the register lists 31 heritage assets that are at risk (38 in the previous year.) Each asset is assigned a risk rating, ranging from 'A - immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed' through to 'F – repair scheme in progress and (where applicable) end use or user identified; functionally redundant buildings with new use agreed but not yet implemented.'

Work continues to decrease the level of identified risk at each of these buildings with the aim of removing them from the Heritage at Risk Register. Movement from A towards F on this scale indicates successful progress of cases towards no longer being at risk and no longer requiring inclusion on the Heritage at Risk Register.

**Heritage Assets at reduced risk on the Heritage at Risk Register
(From January 2020 January 2021).**

Asset Name & Location	Designation	January 2020 Risk	January 2021 Risk
G Block, Bletchley Park	Conservation Area	C	E
Farmhouse at Bradwell Abbey	Grade II Listed Building & Scheduled Ancient Monument	E	F
Longueville Court, Old Wolverton	Grade II Listed Building	C	F

Items at category F are at minimal risk and will be considered for removal within the next review cycle.

CONSERVATION AREAS

The council is continuing to review its 27 Conservation Areas. During 2020, three more reviews were completed for Bletchley, Willen and Stony Stratford Conservation Areas. Woughton on the Green, Castlethorpe, Hanslope, North Crawley and Stoke Goldington will be completed during 2021. The 'General Information Document' supplementing the Conservation Area Review Programme was also completed during 2020. This document gives an overview of the Conservation Areas within the borough, the Borough of Milton Keynes' development over time, the area's geology and topography, building materials and national planning policy context.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

The New Town Heritage Register (a local list) was put on hold during 2020 whilst waiting for a corporate decision in order to allow it to proceed. It has been given this approval in principle, with a further decision to proceed due in August, dependant on the situation in respect of COVID-19 having significantly improved. In the meantime, the Conservation and Archaeology Team have secured £32 from MHCLG to progress the project. The funding requires projects to be complete or largely complete by the end of 2021.

After the last audit revisit in 2016, it has been confirmed with Historic England that a full HER audit will commence in April 2021.

OUTREACH & COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY

2020's scheduled 14th Milton Keynes Archaeology Day was cancelled due to COVID-19. It is hoped that it will be possible to run an event in November of 2021. Planning is in the early stages, but it is anticipated that this year's event will be held in Olney

for the first time, in cooperation with local groups including the Olney Archaeological Society. Details to follow.

Opportunities for 'community' or 'public' archaeology were curtailed during 2020. However, the Active Archaeology Group of Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society (BAS AAG) led by Doug Stuckey have continued the investigations into the C18th landscape park at Great Linford Manor reported on last year. Between lockdowns the group have commenced three trenches across the line of the southern end of the former Ha-Ha attracting interest from members of the public and the Friends of Great Linford Manor Park as well as the landowner Pete Winkelman, Chairman of MK Dons FC.

Report compiled by Nick Crank, Senior Archaeological Officer,
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Conservation & Archaeology Team, Placemaking, Milton Keynes Council

Fieldwork Events in 2020

Event No.	Site Name / Event type	Organisation	Dates	Results
EMK1405	BLOCKS DS-1 AND IN-4, LAKES ESTATE, Bletchley - Trial trenching	MOLA Northampton	24/02/2020 - 28/02/2020	Negative.
EMK1406	Lathbury Park, Lathbury - Trial trenching	KDK Archaeology Ltd	19/02/2020 - 24/02/2020	RB pits.
EMK1407	The Old George Inn, High Street, Stony Stratford - Watching Brief	Cotswold Archaeology	13/02/2020 - 13/02/2020	Negative.
EMK1409	Broughton Manor School, Broughton - Trial trenching	Oxford Archaeology	17/02/2020 - 21/02/2020	Few shallow undated features.
EMK1415	Woughton House hotel, Woughton on the Green - Watching Brief	AOC Archaeology Ltd	16/04/2020	Incomplete / ongoing.
EMK1418	MK East SUE, Newport Pagnell / Moulsoe - Geophysical Survey Area 1	Magnitude Surveys	27/04/2020 - 01/05/2020	Embargoed, pre-planning.
EMK1419	MK East SUE, Newport Pagnell / Moulsoe - Geophysical Survey Area 2	SUMO Geophysics Ltd	27/04/2020 - 01/05/2020	Embargoed, pre-planning.
EMK1420	Land off Yardley Road, Olney - Excavation	Oxford Archaeology	08/06/2020	EIA pit alignment, LIA settlement.
EMK1421	Land at Church Farm, Wavendon - Trial trenching	Cotswold Archaeology	13/05/2020	RB enclosures.
EMK1422	High Park Drive, Wolverton - Trial trenching	MOLA Northampton	06/07/2020	Negative.
EMK1423	Wavendon Golf Course - Excavation	MOLA Northampton	06/07/2020	MIA to RB settlement.
EMK1424	Glebe Meadows new Primary & Secondary School site, Wavendon - Excavation	CFA Archaeology Ltd	06/07/2020	LIA to RB settlement.

EMK1425	The Old Vicarage, Church Street, Olney - Watching Brief	Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd	21/07/2020	See above – Fieldwork.
EMK1427	Eaton Leys substation and pumping station areas - Strip and map excavation	Wessex Archaeology	20/04/2020 - 22/04/2020	LIA-RB field system, pit, gully.
EMK1428	MK East SUE, Willen Rd, Newport Pagnell - Magnetometry Survey	Magnitude Surveys	17/08/2020 - 20/08/2020	Embargoed, pre-planning.
EMK1429	17 The Green, Woughton-on-the-Green - Watching Brief	Border Archaeology	03/08/2020 - 04/08/2020	Negative.
EMK1430	Land north of Lavendon Road, Olney - Excavation	Thames Valley Archaeological Services	06/10/2020	Roman road surfaces, cremations, pits.
EMK1432	Land adjacent to Fairfield Primary School, Calverton - Watching Brief	Border Archaeology	13/10/2020	Report not received.
EMK1433	United Reformed Church Hall, High Street, Newport Pagnell - Watching Brief	KDK Archaeology Ltd	09/04/2020 - 07/05/2020	Negative.
EMK1434	Land South of Cuckoo Hill Bungalow, Castlethorpe Road, Hanslope - Trial trenching	Cotswold Archaeology	12/10/2020 - 15/10/2020	Negative.
EMK1435	Passenham Quarry, Phase 14, Calverton - Excavation	MOLA Northampton	16/11/2020	Further ring-ditch of ploughed out EBA barrow.
EMK1438	Great Linford Manor Park - Watching Brief 2	Cotswold Archaeology	09/12/2020	Work ongoing.

Notes: EBA – early Bronze Age; EIA – early Iron Age; MIA – middle Iron Age; LIA – late Iron Age; RB – Romano-British.